



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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Contact: Renee Hoffman
Phone: 919/733-5612

GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES DROUGHT EXPANDS TO ALL 100 COUNTIES
Urges Water Conservation by Residents and Local Governments Statewide

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that for the first time this year, all 100 counties in North Carolina are experiencing either abnormally dry conditions, moderate, severe or extreme drought. He also urged residents and local government agencies to observe water conservation directives in their communities and to voluntarily conserve water as much as possible.

“Despite recent scattered thunderstorms, the drought is expanding into the southern coastal plains, the Triad and the Triangle,” said Easley. “The northeastern parts of the state are also now abnormally dry and until we receive enough rainfall to replenish the groundwater supplies, all North Carolinians need to do everything they can to conserve water.”

The latest U.S. Drought Monitor’s map shows the moderate drought has expanded eastward into counties in the Triad, Triangle and the southern coastal plain. Also, seven counties in northeastern North Carolina that were not previously listed in any drought category were added to the list of counties that are abnormally dry.

Rainfall measurements taken during the last two months show that North Carolina communities have received about 50 percent of their normal precipitation for this time of year. Due to drought, 32 public water supply systems in North Carolina have placed water use restrictions on residents. Twenty-three systems have enacted voluntary water use restrictions, and nine have put mandatory water restrictions in place. The nine systems that have enacted mandatory restrictions are located in Chatham, Johnston, New Hanover and Union counties and the town of Blowing Rock.

Easley continues to direct state agencies in the westernmost counties that are experiencing the state’s most severe forms of drought to stop all non-essential water use. This includes not washing vehicles, using water for ornamental purposes, watering grass and washing down surfaces such as sidewalks. For several weeks, those 21 counties have been categorized as experiencing either extreme or severe drought.

Easley recommends the following simple steps that all North Carolinians can use to conserve water during the dry conditions:

- Take shorter showers.
- Add compost and other organic material to your soil to improve its water-holding capacity.
- Keep a pitcher of cold water in the fridge, instead of running tap water until it is cool.